



Westbourne
House School

CHICHESTER

POLICY FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES, SEN & LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

**This is the policy of Westbourne House School, which incorporates the
Prep School, Pre-Prep, Early Years Foundation Stage as well as provision for boarding**

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Westbourne House School to appreciate the individuality of each child who comes into our care, and to support and nurture their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, irrespective of their starting point.

The School is not academically selective and welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities offered and can flourish in its caring environment either as a day pupil or as a boarder. The governors and staff are firmly committed to inclusivity and to giving every child the best possible start in life. Treating every child as an individual is important, and pupils with physical disabilities are welcome. Pupils, whose Special Educational Needs (SEN) and learning difficulties are suited to the curriculum and environment, are also welcome provided that the Individual Needs Department can provide them with the help and support that they require.

Aims

We aim to work proactively to create a supportive, non-stigmatising and inclusive educational environment to promote learning for all our children and to comply with all statutory requirements and best practice, in particular:

- ISI Handbook: Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements – March 2023
- Boarding Schools: National Minimum Standards – September 2022
- Admission of pupils with complex medical needs or disabilities – February 2018 (MOSA)
- The Equality Act 2010
- What Equality Law Means for You as an Education Provider: School – 2014 (The Equality and Human Rights Commission)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (January 2015)
- Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation stage (11 October 2024)
 - During the Covid-19 outbreak the following is also complied with:
 - Early Years and Childcare Covid-19 Guidance
 - Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak
- Children & Families Act (2014)

Practice and Procedure

Whilst it is acknowledged that children have different starting points and progress at different rates, particularly during their early years, we consider that reasonable adjustments may have to be made to the school environment, curriculum or delivery in order to make the learning experience more successful for some children. This may be a transient or ongoing need.

We consider a child has an individual/special need if he or she:

- is experiencing significant difficulties achieving his/her learning goals, when compared with his/her peers (though it is acknowledged that this may be a developmental delay rather than a learning difficulty).
- has a disability which prevents him/her making use of our educational facilities.
- experiences significant communication and/or social interaction difficulties.
- presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- has experienced a significant emotional shock or trauma, as in bereavement. (This is dealt with more fully in our *Bereavement* policy).
- has English as an additional language and has not yet become fluent in it. (This is dealt with more fully in our *English as an Additional Language* policy).

As a school we:

- do not treat disabled pupils 'less favourably'
- make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage
- draw up plans to show how, over time, we will increase access to education for disabled pupils (please refer to Accessibility Plan)
- comply with the Disability Equality Duty
- prepare, publish, implement and report on a Disability Equality Scheme
- provide auxiliary aids and services to ensure that a disabled pupil is not disadvantaged. Such steps are taken as is reasonable and are always specific to the individual.

Teaching and Learning

We aim to identify any individual's special/individual needs early and thereafter provide a graduated approach to the provision we make for these children to ensure:

- Each child has his/her individual needs met.
- Action is determined in consultation with the parents.
- The views of the child are taken into account.
- Provision and progress are monitored and reviewed regularly.
- A collaborative approach to challenges is adopted, using the experience and expertise of all the staff and the child's parents/guardians, plus outside agencies when appropriate.
- Disciplinary procedures are NOT used inappropriately to deal with children whose behaviour may not fit the norm or who have congenital conditions (such as ADHD, ASD, Tourette's Syndrome).

Differentiation / Inclusion

In most cases, a pupil's individual/additional needs will be met within the classroom with quality first teaching delivered by the class/subject teacher:

- In consultation with the parents, child, class teacher, form tutor, Head of Year, subject teacher, and IENCo, the IN teacher or class teacher or Head of Year will plan and deliver an individual education programme to meet the individual needs of the child that are over and above those that can be met by the usual curriculum, activities and/or level of differentiation in the classroom. This will be recorded on an additional learning plan or emotional behavioural support plan. Subject-specific targets will be recorded by the class/subject teachers and monitored individually. A solution focused approach will be adopted whenever possible.
- All staff are required to complete the Individual Needs Provision in the Classroom Form so as to outline the provision they make for pupils in their teaching groups.
- The child's progress will be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- Parents will be kept informed of the child's progress and invited to contribute to termly reviews.
- The IENCo and Specialist Teacher will be available to offer advice on strategies and interventions to both the teachers and the parents. They will be responsible for maintaining the child's profile; a record of their educational history, identification, intervention and progress.
- The needs of individual children may be discussed in the weekly staff meetings and/or the weekly departmental meetings in order to draw from the experience and expertise of other members of staff, and ensure a cohesive approach within the school.
- Training and awareness is promoted through in-service training in addition to staff formulating their personal programmes to continue their own professional development. Several of the staff have achieved NVQs, certificates, diplomas and M.A. (Ed.) qualifications related to IEN.
- The IENCo reports to the governors of the school on an annual basis.
- In Year 5 upwards prep support is also offered.
- Pupil's needs for special arrangements in examinations are reviewed regularly.
- Pupil's progress is monitored throughout with external assessments for all years and additional school exams from Y5 upwards.

For a few children, it will be considered appropriate for them to be withdrawn from class for short periods of time to receive small group or 1:1 intervention programmes. Withdrawal will only be considered if the support deemed necessary cannot be delivered within the classroom situation.

In such cases the IENCo and Specialist Teacher will take a greater responsibility for planning, executing and monitoring the intervention deemed to be the most appropriate.

If the intervention does not enable the child to make satisfactory progress, the parents, with the support of the IENCo, may be asked to seek advice and support from external agencies.

With parental permission, the IENCo is then responsible for maintaining communication with the agencies involved, to ensure a cohesive learning experience for the child.

In a minority of cases, it may then be considered necessary by all parties concerned, to apply for a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment (EHCNA). The IENCo will be responsible for initiating this stage and for facilitating annual reviews if an Education, Health & Care Plan is issued.

The IENCo, with parents' permission, is responsible for liaising with the next school.

The Admissions Process

The School's selection policy is described in its Admissions Policy. Applications from all who have the ability and aptitude to access an academic curriculum are welcome.

However, parents of children with physical disabilities, SEN, emotional or learning difficulties are advised to discuss their child's requirements with the School before they come for a taster day so that adequate provision can be made for them on the day. This also opens a discussion as to how their child's needs will be met, if they choose to take up a place at the school.

Parents are asked to provide a copy of a medical report, in-house school assessment or an Educational Psychologist's report to support their request, for example, for large print material, extra time, use of laptops or other special arrangements.

Prior to Entry

Each pupil with a disability and/or SEN requires special consideration and accommodations. If appropriate adjustments need to be put in place, they will be discussed thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers, including adjustments that can reasonably be made to the curricular and extracurricular activities before their child becomes a pupil at the School.

It may be that a prospective pupil's behaviour, for whatever reason, poses a risk of severe disruption to the learning environment for other pupils, and for that reason the School can decide not to admit the prospective pupil.

Parents should note that should special needs become apparent during the course of a pupil's time at Westbourne, the Head may deem it necessary to require parents to remove the child from the School (see the School's Terms and Conditions).

Entry Tests

We are allowed by law to make use of an entry test but, as stated in our Policy Statement and Admissions Policy, the School is not academically selective. However, on occasion the school may decide to test pupils if we feel that it is appropriate.

Barriers to Learning

The School recognises that social, emotional and behavioural barriers to learning can be associated with some disabilities.

Mental illness or learning difficulties can cause behavioural issues. The School aims to work together with families to overcome or minimise these as far as is possible and put in place reasonable adjustments as required.

Physical Accessibility

Parents and prospective parents of disabled children may wish to obtain copies of the School's Accessibility Plan from the Bursar.

This shows the ways in which the governors plan to make the buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, disabled parents and visitors.

The School has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make adjustments to take account of an individual pupil's needs, within the constraints imposed by its historic and listed buildings, scattered site and resources. Facilities for wheel-chair users and hearing loops are being introduced progressively as the buildings are upgraded.

Pupils with Educational, Health & Care Plans (EHC) Plan And Carers

Pupils with a EHC Plan from their local authorities who are suited to the School's educational offer are welcome.

If a pupil with an EHC Plan requires their dedicated carer in school, for example, to assist with personal care, writing, etc this can be accommodated provided that the carer has an enhanced DBS check arranged by the School and complies with the child protection regime in force at the time. The School would require a carer (like a new member of staff) to sign a written agreement undertaking to comply with the School's child protection policies and to attend the child protection induction briefing that is given to all new members of staff before working unsupervised on site.

A pupil's dedicated carer is not a school employee and the pupil's parents would be asked to provide the School with a written undertaking indemnifying it from any legal responsibility or cost connected with the provision of their services to their child.

The Individual Needs (IEN) Department

The IEN Department is staffed by fully qualified specialists and assistants who are able to support pupils with learning difficulties.

Some disabled pupils may also require specialist support from the IEN Department. This should be discussed with parents before their child enters the school. Pupils with identified or suspected learning difficulties may be asked to be assessed at their parents' expense by a specialist so that the areas that require support can be identified.

Reasonable adjustments will be made within the classroom and specialist one-to-one lessons and help with study skills are offered outside the normal curriculum.

The School works closely with the child and their parents and to help them to overcome the barriers that their difficulties present.

The IEN Department will prepare an Additional Learning Plan/Behavioural Support Plan for each child, setting achievable targets. Parents and teachers review the plan regularly and, where appropriate, the child is encouraged to take ownership of it and to set their own targets.

English As A Second Language

In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of Westbourne House, pupils must be competent English speakers. The School may recommend that some children, whose first language at home is not English, receive tuition in English as an additional language.

Role of the Individual Needs Co-ordinator (IENCo)

The Head of the IEN Department (IENCo), Mrs Sharon Morton, has an important role as Westbourne House's IENCo, working closely with all staff.

She plays a key role in determining the strategic development of the IEN policy and provision in the School in order to cater for the individual needs of pupils with SEN. She will liaise closely with the pupil's teaching staff, family and where appropriate, with the School's medical staff and with external agencies.

The Head of the IEN Department attends regular external training in order to remain current in her duties as IENCo and reports to the Governors on an annual basis.

One of the responsibilities of the governors' Academic and Pastoral Committee is oversight of the provision of learning support and accessibility for pupils with disabilities, SEN and learning difficulties.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Identification

A child might be identified as having individual/additional educational needs as a result of any of the following:

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are continually monitored against the Early Years Learning Goals.
- At the end of Reception (prior to moving up into Year 1), the children undertake a cognitive assessment (verbal and non-verbal reasoning).
- All pupils from Y1 to Y6 take a CEM Primary Insight test in Mathematics, Arithmetic, Reading, Spelling and Developed Ability this is to monitor progress of the individual and to identify areas of particular strength or weakness.

- Summative and formative assessments are used throughout the school to identify a child's strengths and weaknesses and to inform target driven programmes (standardised levels are used to monitor progress) specific to each subject.
- Any parent or teacher may request a brief in-house assessment by the IENCo, should they be concerned about a child's progress or identify a specific need.
- The school may suggest to parents/guardians that a more thorough assessment of the child's needs should be conducted by an outside agency (such as a Specialist Teacher, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapist, Sure Start (First visiting team), CAMHS, other Health services). The IENCo will liaise and support as appropriate.
- Some children will already have been identified as having special educational needs by outside agencies, on entry to our school.
 - NB: The teaching staff at Westbourne House are not qualified to undertake diagnostic assessments; however, the school's IENCO and Deputy IENCO are and will assist in this area if required/appropriate.

Record Keeping

- A register of children with individual/additional educational needs is kept on the Google Drive and is distributed to all teaching staff every term, once updated. All ALPs and summaries of both internal and external assessments, with advice concerning differentiation and inclusion strategies are also stored on the Google Drive. Information is updated as necessary and ALPs are reviewed termly.
- Each child with significant additional learning needs has an IEN profile, kept in the IEN rooms, detailing their personal information, progress, assessment reports, and ALPs. With parental permission (as of April 2018), these are made available to outside agencies and are passed on to the child's next school.

Staff Training

All staff (including teaching and support staff) are regularly trained on working with SEN and disabilities. This training focuses on helping each child to reach their maximum potential, with the appropriate adjustments (such as large print or using coloured paper) that can give full access to the curriculum and facilities of the School to the greatest extent possible.

The School trains its teachers to differentiate within the curriculum and to take into account pupils' individual learning needs (as well as the needs of pupils considered to be significantly more able in one or more specific fields).

The IENCo liaises with the teaching staff about the most appropriate means of meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and learning difficulties. The IENCo has an important role in ensuring consistency of approach by all teachers in providing, for example, access to learning materials that are easier to read and understand, or additional arrangements in exams.

School Behaviour and Discipline

The School takes pride in its well-developed system of pastoral care for social interaction amongst pupils. All pupils, from the youngest in the nursery upwards are taught that victimisation and bullying are prohibited and will not be tolerated. The School's objective is to ensure that a disabled pupil, or a pupil with SEN or other protected characteristic, does not suffer less favourable treatment as a result of discrimination.

Pupils are taught, through the curriculum and other activities, the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with courtesy and consideration. The School's behaviour policies/school rules make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment in all its pernicious forms, including racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, gender-related, sexual orientated homophobic, disabled and cyber, in causing serious psychological damage and even suicide. Considerable teacher time is expended in preventing bullying, victimisation and harassment and in dealing with it when it occurs. All pupils understand that the School has a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and that bullies can expect strong sanctions to be applied to them.

Partnerships with Parents

The School's hope is that all parents will feel able to share any concerns about their child with the pastoral staff in order that a healthy partnership for the care of their child can be developed. The IENCo, other pastoral staff, tutors, teaching and medical staff who are involved with their child are always happy to discuss any parental concerns.

A member of staff will always ask to see a parent if they feel that an adjustment to the curriculum or Additional Learning Plan followed by their child might be in their best interests, or if there is a specific concern.

Complaints

The School naturally hopes that a parent will not feel that they have cause to complain but our Complaints Policy is published on the website and available from the School office for any parent who wishes to use it.

Additionally, all parents of children with SEN or disabilities have the legal right to seek redress from the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if they believe that their son or daughter has received unfavourable treatment.

Reasonable Adjustments, Auxiliary Aids and Services

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils and applicants who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils and applicants who do not have disabilities.

A pupil or applicant is disabled if he/she suffers from a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In most cases, disabilities will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

The school has also considered the difficulties of 'access' to education for those with specified types of disability, e.g. sight or hearing, dyslexia, hayfever, eczema, asthma, food allergies, migraine, diabetes, speech impairment, physical disability, special needs etc.

Each case is considered on its own merits and every effort is made to accommodate the needs of the individual within reasonable parameters with particular regard to all aspects of safety.

The Scope of Duty

Westbourne House seeks to ensure that disabled pupils and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage, by making reasonable adjustments:

- to our policies, criteria and practices (ie the way we do things); and
- by providing auxiliary aids and services (ie additional support or assistance).

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples include pieces of equipment, extra staff assistance, note-taking, induction loops, audio-visual fire alarms, readers and assistance with guiding. For instance, children, depending on need, could be allowed to use laptop computers in class, or given large print or documents printed on coloured paper if required. Menus can be devised to cater for special dietary requirements.

What the duty does not cover

We are not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Similarly, we do not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the school.

How to Request an Adjustment

Westbourne House prides itself on considering whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled applicant or pupil. However, we do not always think of all possible adjustments and we want to work with parents to think as creatively as possible about this matter.

If a child is disabled and it is believed that he/she is being put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils without disabilities and there is an adjustment that we could make which would overcome this, parents may write to the IENCo setting out in full evidence-based need, the adjustment required and (if necessary) how the School could put this into practice.

The School's Response

In some cases, the School will be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment as soon as possible. In particular, it is envisaged that where an adjustment is of low cost and satisfies the non cost-related criteria listed below, it will be approved and implemented speedily.

In other cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult or more financially costly, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the

substantial disadvantage that the pupil or applicant is suffering and what measures it is reasonable for the School to take.

In these cases, the School may seek input from teachers, other experts (such as doctors and/or educational psychologists), parents and the child in question.

How the School decides whether an adjustment is reasonable

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the School will consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the pupil;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under an EHC Plan;
- the School's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other pupils (and potential pupils).

Confidentiality

Parents (or child if the School believes he/she has sufficient understanding of the nature of the request) may request that the existence or nature of a child's disability be treated as confidential by the school. Such requests are taken into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable.

Outcome

Once the School has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, we will write to the parents, setting out the decision and the reasons.

What parents can do if they are not happy with the School's decision

If parents are not happy with the School's decision about the reasonableness of the adjustment, they may lodge a complaint using the School's Complaints Procedure.

Charging for Extra Tuition

Often a child would benefit from a period of extra support, whether in class or on a one-to-one basis, that may fall outside the scope of the policy on reasonable adjustments outlined in 'Reasonable Adjustments, Auxiliary Aids and Services' above. In these cases, the IENCo would be pleased to discuss with parents the options for extra help and the basis of charging for these additional services.

Adjustments to Exam Arrangements

“The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. Awarding bodies are not required to make adjustments to the academic or other standard being applied when conducting an examination/ assessment.” (JCQ. 2022-23: Section A:1.2)

With this in mind, sufficient arrangements will be made to enable pupils who experience persistent and significant difficulties to access assessments.

Reasonable adjustments should not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the pupil an unfair assessment advantage over others undertaking the same or similar assessments. Each pupil will be considered individually in light of their needs and a request for special arrangements in examinations has to be made of prospective schools prior to pre-tests and CE examinations.

Staffing and Resources

The IN Department aims to be a whole-school resource that covers an ever-changing, diverse, set of needs. As such, we negotiate for funding from many quarters, though the department is issued with an annual budget for basic materials and training. The department has a classroom plus a small tutorial room in each of the schools.

Our staff are our main resource, and for support that is over and above the reasonable adjustments a charge is made by the school for our services to subsidise costs. The Deputy Head - Academic is the SEN ‘Champion’, representing the IENCo within the SMT.

High priority is placed on the staffing of the Individual Educational Needs Department and to this end there is a strong team of appropriately qualified teachers and assistants (as detailed in the staff handbook).

Monitoring and review

The School will review and monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy (and appendices – if appropriate). This policy will be kept up-to-date and amended to take account of legislative and regulatory changes.

Last Review Date	Next Review Date	Reviewer(s)
October 2024	September 2025	Bursar Head of Pre-Prep Deputy Head – Academic IENCo